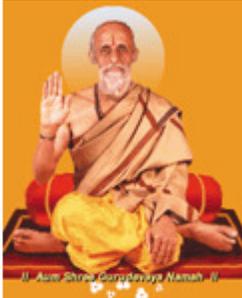


Self Awakening

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Maha Yoga - Simplest, no cost and highest method of self-realization



Contents

About the e-newsletter	1
Message from Kaka- Maharaj	1
Article on Maha Yoga part 3	3
Churning of the Heart	4
Answers to questions	6
Middle-East visit	8
Science and Spirituality	14
Chaitanya Melawa, Mumbai	16
Global Mahayoga Trial	17
Upcoming events	17
What's new	18
How to contribute content	18

About the e-newsletter

The purpose of this quarterly newsletter, Self Awakening, is to inform Sadhaks (seekers of self realization) about Maha Yoga, a very simple, no cost and effective method of self-realization.

P. P. Shri Narayan Kaka Maharaj of Nashik, India is a leading teacher and exponent of Maha Yoga, a centuries old tradition, whereby a realized Guru (Siddha Guru) awakens the Universal Life Energy (Kundalini) within the Sadhak, eventually leading him/her to self-realization.

To the tens of thousands of Sadhaks in the Maha Yoga tradition all over the world, this e-newsletter is intended to provide virtual Satsang. It is intended to help keep Sadhaks engaged in Maha

Yoga, be informed about Maha Yoga-related events around the world, and to provide a forum for getting guidance about Maha Yoga from P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj.

The success of this e-newsletter will depend upon Sadhak participation through their contributions of content. Sadhaks are therefore encouraged to contribute news about Maha Yoga-related events in their parts of the world, thoughtful articles and life experiences, and questions about Maha Yoga and their Sadhan (practice) they would like P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj to address. Please send any content or questions you would like to submit to self.awakening@gmail.com

Message from Shri Kaka Maharaj

All of us on this earth desire happiness and many of us go through great efforts to achieve that goal. Some look for happiness in material things, but are often disappointed because of the transitory nature of the material world. Others look to religion and spirituality for happiness, but too often their attempts fail because of the difficulties of most such paths and the lack of perseverance and discipline on part of the seekers.

India has a long history of having developed various religions and paths to guide humanity in its search for peace and happiness. In addition to having given birth to major religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, among others, it has also contributed the treasures of Yoga to the rest of the world. Yoga paths, such as Hatha Yoga, Mantra Yoga, Laya Yoga, Raja Yoga, etc.

all rely on awakening the Mother Energy, or the Latent Spiritual Power (Kundalini Shakti), that lies dormant in all of us, since it has been found that this Energy, once awakened, can lead to eternal bliss and happiness. However, the rigorous practice of such Yogas can be daunting for most of us and as a result most seekers going down those paths also fail to achieve the bliss and happiness they desire.

The great 14th century Yoga Master, Shri Jnyaneshwar Maharaj, who is considered by many as being the crown jewel of Indian Yogis, has provided a clear and simple path for those of us looking for spiritual happiness and thirsty for such knowledge. In his master-work, Jnyaneshwari, he directs us to Maha Yoga, whereby a Maha Yoga

Message from Shri Kaka Maharaj (continued)

Master/Guru can awaken the dormant Mother Energy (Kundalini Shakti) in each one of us. This awakening of the Kundalini Shakti is also referred to as Kundalini Shaktipat Deeksha.

Once the Mother Energy is awakened in an aspirant by the grace of a Siddha Guru, the aspirant is assured of achieving the happiness he/she seeks without having to go through the rigors of other Yogic practices. He/she will have amazing experiences during effortless meditation and in other aspects of his/her life. These experiences will happen automatically during the practice of meditation (Sadhan) guided by the Mother Energy and will depend on each individual aspirant's spiritual needs. Such experiences will capture the hearts of eager aspirants and keep them steadfast in their practice of Maha Yoga, leading to happiness and satisfaction in all elements of their lives and eventually to eternal bliss. Maha Yoga, or Kundalini Shaktipat Yoga, is therefore the simplest and easiest form of yoga the world has ever seen.

So my dear friends, this Maha Yoga path, even in these troubled and transitory times, has the potential to move your hearts, positively and spontaneously, and to bring out in each one of you a natural and automatic flow of consciousness that will lead to everlasting

peace of mind. I urge you, therefore, to take advantage of this unique and free opportunity for achieving inner peace through Self Awakening followed by regular Sadhan during which you will be able to relax your body and surrender your thoughts to experience your own inner core of bliss.

To help Sadhaks and other seekers who are dispersed all over the world achieve "virtual Satsang", six months ago we launched as an experiment this quarterly e-newsletter which has been aptly named "**Self Awakening**". We intend to communicate through this e-newsletter on an ongoing basis, news about the Ashrams in Nashik and Pune and the Prachar efforts all over the world. We will also have interesting articles on Maha Yoga and on Yoga in general, as well as answers to questions from Sadhaks. I hope you are all as excited about this experiment on virtual Satsang as I am.

I humbly pray to my Gurudev, P. P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj to grace the readers of this e-newsletter with his blessings and to induce them to follow the easy path of **Self Awakening** which is Maha Yoga.

Article on Maha Yoga - Part 3

In previous sections of the article on Maha Yoga, which appeared in the first two issues of this newsletter, we described what Maha Yoga is, how it relates to other forms of Yoga and how to get started on this path. In Part 3 we discuss what happens during Initiation (Deeksha). In the final section, which will appear in the next issue, we will discuss what one can expect to have happen as one progresses on this path.

What Happens During Initiation (Deeksha)?

The day of initiation is a special day in the aspirant's life, the day on which he launches on a certain path of spiritual progress and enlightenment. On that day he needs to do a number of things to get ready and get initiated:

- Before the appointed time, an aspirant should get up early, perform his morning routine, take a bath and worship his own Deity (God) as appropriate.
- He should dress in loose garments and sit comfortably (cross-legged or otherwise), all alone in a room at home, on a padded carpet covered by a clean white cloth. Doors and windows to the meditation room should be kept closed for privacy and to reduce any interruptions/distractions.
- He should sit facing East or North, close his eyes at the stipulated time of initiation and contemplate on the image/presence of the Siddha Guru.
- He should inhale rapidly and exhale slowly seven or eight times and then relax his body completely and observe his automatic/normal breathing.
- He should not willfully make any bodily/physical movements, but to the extent that physical movements arise from within he should give such movement absolute freedom.
- Keeping his eyes closed he should devote one hour or more for the meditation.
- During the meditation the aspirant can change his posture for convenience/comfort.
- After the meditation, when his eyes open he should thank his Deity (God) and the Siddha Guru in whatever way his tradition suggests

The experience of each aspirant during initiation is likely to be unique. Experiences of physical feelings and movements and intense mental concentration or even calmness are fairly common. Some aspirants have been known to have automatically put their bodies in

yoga postures (Asanas) and conducted various types of rhythmic breathing movements (Pranayam), all without ever having done so before the initiation. Others have experienced soothing sounds, sensations of heat and throbbing along the spine and even seen visions of God as indicated in their belief-systems or religions. Still others have had feelings of mental calmness, and even bliss. These experiences are referred to as Kriyas.

It is important not to get too concerned about whether one has a specific experience but not another. All these experiences are valid, and specific experiences will depend on the accumulated impressions of an aspirant's past deeds (Karma) and his/her receptivity to the initiation (Deeksha). The aspirant should just observe the various experiences and enjoy those that are blissful.

After the initiation, the aspirant should follow these instructions:

- Sit for meditation (Sadhana) every day for about an hour at a convenient time (following the above instructions for the initiation day).
- Observe dietary and other restrictions indicated by the Siddha Guru.
- Not sit for meditation for at least four hours after a meal.
- Not narrate one's experiences to others without permission from the Siddha Guru.
- Having performed Sadhana every day, at the end of a month inform the Siddha Guru of one's spiritual progress.

Regular and diligent practice of Sadhana after initiation will result in the aspirant making rapid spiritual progress. He will continue to experience automatically many of the Kriyas he experienced during the initiation and will gradually begin to experience new ones as his Kundalini energy, with the grace of the Siddha Guru, begins the needed spiritual purification of his body and mind. He will also find himself not experiencing many of the Kriyas he had earlier as they will have done their job of spiritual purification and will not be needed any more. In this manner, the aspirant will gradually reach higher Yogic states to where he will begin to actually experience the presence of Prana/Chaitanya in himself and in everything around him. In those advanced stages he will not have a need to observe any of the restrictions and his Kriyas will also stop automatically. He will then have achieved Self-Realization and will be in a state of constant bliss, ready for liberation.

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt

Beginning with this issue of the e-newsletter we will bring to readers excerpts from P. P. Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj's trilogy, "Churning of the Heart". P. P. Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj was from the same Shaktipat lineage as P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj, a lineage which can be traced in recent times to P. P. Swami Gangadhar Tirth Maharaj who lived in the second half of the 19th century. In these excerpts, P. P. Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj describes his experiences and interactions with his Guru, P. P. Swami Vishnu Tirth Maharaj, who he refers to as Maharajshri. These excerpts are published here with the kind permission of Swami Shivom Tirth Ashram, Inc.

Sadhan and Japa

Once it came to my mind that I must do regular japa [chanting] of the Gayatri mantra. Upon finding a suitable opportunity I asked Maharajshri about this and he said, "I shall think about it."

When I mentioned it again after a couple of days, he said, "Okay, I will think about it."

Now I was reluctant to ask him again and again, but I mustered some courage and asked him one more time. Maharajshri said, "Do one thing. First begin with one round of a rosary. When one round of the rosary is about to end, we shall decide what to do next."

I said, "That is fine."

The next day, after finishing my bath and other things, I sat down on my seat. I had just rolled over a couple of beads when intense kriyas began. The rosary was tossed aside. When the intensity of the kriya subsided I picked up the rosary and had hardly started my chanting when kriyas started. On that day, in spite of many attempts, I couldn't chant. The same thing happened the next day and also the day after that. Helpless, I pleaded to Maharajshri. He laughed and said, "If you are unable to do even one rosary, how will you do it daily?"

"After Shaktipat initiation, when kriyas have progressed, regular japa is difficult because kriyas begin to interfere. The moment an aspirant concentrates his mind on performing japa, the kriyas begin. If the intensity of the kriyas is severe, then it becomes still more difficult. So it is best that you give up the thought of regular japa. I did not tell you this earlier because I wanted you to have an experience that would make it easy for you to understand what I am saying. Actually you do not even need japa now.

Regular japa and so forth are spiritual practices for the awakening of the Shakti. These rituals can be performed with the desire of attaining something and are not concerned with the awakening of the Shakti. Rituals carried out with a spiritual perspective are the only ones concerned with the awakening of the Shakti. If the ritual of chanting is performed on the basis of prana [the dynamic life-force], then there is a possibility of a quicker awakening. If it is performed on the basis of the mind, intellect and heart, it takes a longer time. But in Shaktipat this same goal is achieved with the grace of a Guru, so there is no need for regular japa. The nature of sadhana is transformed in to sadhan. Now why do you want to go back to deliberate egoistic spiritual practice? Do your sadhan. Your mind will continue to be purified by this sadhan."

I said, "Does this mean that after the awakening of Shakti and after it becomes active, worship, recitation, japa and other practices are not needed anymore?" Maharajshri said, "You certainly do not need them, but if the kriya feels the necessity, then there is a need. That is, after awakening of the Shakti, worship, recitations, japa, and so forth should happen in the form of kriyas. When that type of kriya stops, worship and recitation, too, are left behind. Then even if you sit down to do them, they do not happen, just as you sat down to do the Gayatri japa now but could not do it. This means that your japa was not a form of kriya but simply a desire to do regular japa that arose in you after listening to other people."

I said, "Currently I am reading *Shandilya Bhakti Sutras*. There it is written that japa, kirtans [devotional songs glorifying God] and other practices done after awakening give an impetus to activities of the Shakti."

At this Maharajshri said, "Only so long as the kriyas do not manifest. It is not fixed how long japa, kirtans, and other such practices should continue. When the intensity of the kriya is manifested, then all these stop on their own or are transformed into kriyas. In regular japa or a ritual, one has to complete a certain number of chants, which is not possible in sadhan. Hence japa, kirtans, and so forth cannot take place according to rules. If they happen, any number of repetitions might be possible, or none at all. Japa, kirtan and pranayam [control of breath] are manifested in kriyas, but only as long as the kriya persists."

I said, "The essential point is that the attempt to do regular japa is contrary to the feeling of surrender."

Maharajshri said, "Yes. An aspirant of Shaktipat must prevent himself from becoming an obstacle in the progress of a kriya. When your efforts end, only then will natural kriyas begin to progress."

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

I asked another question upon hearing this. “Is tolerating the joys and sorrows that come from the world a surrender?”

The answer was, “Joys and sorrows are the results or fruits of the activity of the Shakti on the basis of Prarabdha (destiny). To accept and bear whatever fruit it gives is surrender. If an aspirant opposes, it means he has not accepted things. Opposition also means that the aspirant has reacted to the effect of the results on his mind, which is a cause of further accumulation of impressions. All these issues deserve serious thinking on the part of the aspirant and are helpful in sadhan.”

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Answers to questions of Sadhaks

- **Question:** Is it fine for women to read Guru-Charitra? And are there any benefits from reading it aloud?
Answer: The original Guru-Charitra was written by P. P. Swami Vasudevanand Saraswati Maharaj (also known as P. P. Tembe Swami Maharaj) in the form of Mantra. Mantras are generally chanted aloud, and through their sound patterns and the vibrations they create in the body and mind of the chanter, they are imbued with spiritual and physical powers. P. P. Swami Vasudevanand Saraswati Maharaj specified that women should not read the Guru-Charitra in its original form since reading it can create certain health-related problems. This has been corroborated by women who have attempted to do so. There is a version of Guru-Charitra known as “Saptshiti Guru-Charitra Sar”, written by P. P. Swami Vasudevanand Saraswati Maharaj himself, which can be read aloud by all. The suggestion that women should not read aloud the Guru-Charitra in its original form has nothing to do with the spiritual status of women and men. It has only to do with their physical and physiological differences.
- **Question:** I live in a one room flat (apartment) which I share with a few friends. As a result I am unable to sit for Sadhana by myself, without having anyone else in the room. Is it fine for me to sit for Sadhana in the presence of my friends or others who have not been initiated?
Answer: A Sadhak should not sit for Sadhana in the presence of others (who are not sitting for Sadhana themselves) as privacy is a very important element in our ability to let go of control over our bodies. This letting go of control over the body and allowing the automatic movements (kriyas) to happen is very important when we sit for Sadhana. The presence of uninitiated observers is very likely to inhibit a Sadhak from truly letting himself go during Sadhana. Samudayik (group) Sadhana with other Sadhaks is fine because all participants are involved in Sadhana themselves, and in the absence of uninitiated observers, Sadhaks can feel uninhibited in letting go of any control over their bodies. I would suggest that the Sadhak in this situation sit for Sadhana late at night, when his room-mates are asleep or at other times when they are not in the flat.
- **Question:** I do Sadhana regularly for 30 to 40 minutes everyday. But I do not get any of the divine experiences I have heard others describe, or are written in books about Maha Yoga. And even after doing Sadhana, sometimes I experience an unexplained fear in my mind. Please advise

Answer: You should continue to sit for your Sadhana regularly, keeping your body totally relaxed, just observing your natural and automatic breathing and whatever physical and mental activities (kriyas) happen to you. You should not “do” anything during Sadhana, but let whatever happens happen automatically. Sit for Sadhana with a prayer for total surrender and leave everything else that happens to the Mother Energy or Prana Shakti.

It is very important to keep in mind that each Sadhak’s experiences are unique and will depend to a large extent on one’s Karma and the diligence with which one sits for Sadhana. There is a tendency for Sadhaks to dwell on what experiences they are having and which ones they aren’t, and being concerned that they are not making appropriate progress if they are not experiencing all the experiences they have read about in books and magazines. This is very counter-productive because it is not at all necessary for each Sadhak to get all or any of the experiences one reads about in books and magazines. It is very important to remember that experiences during Sadhana are not ends in themselves but are only the means by which the Prana Shakti achieves the specific type of spiritual purification needed by you. So you will only experience those activities/feelings/sensations that are uniquely essential for your spiritual progress. Focusing on the experiences themselves will only lead to enhancing one’s ego or to an unnecessary feeling of despair, both of which will detract from making further spiritual progress. It is important for you to observe your automatic breathing, be aware of what you are experiencing, and enjoy those experiences that are pleasant or blissful, but not dwell too much on the experiences per se.

Whatever “fear” you are experiencing is all a part of the Kriyas that happen, and which are unique to each individual depending on his/her needs. These Kriyas remove the effects of past Karmas (actions) and will quit occurring as the negative effects of past Karmas get erased through regular Sadhana. As one makes progress in ones Sadhana, meditation experiences will become more stable and peaceful. Gradually, only finer and subtle movements of Prana (Mother Energy) will be experienced leading to a profound sense of calmness and bliss. Rest assured that if you are diligent in conducting your Sadhana regularly, the awakened Kundalini Shakti will also be doing her job of spiritual purification with great diligence.

Answers to questions of Sadhaks (continued)

- **Question:** I have been trying to follow the instructions for an Introductory Study of Maha Yoga. As suggested, I keep my body relaxed and try to observe my breathing. However, after a short while my mind gets distracted and I start thinking about all kinds of things. How can I keep my mind from getting distracted and to keep observing my breathing for longer periods?

Answer: It is very important for Sadhaks not to try to control their minds or their thoughts. Just as you observe your breath, observe your thoughts. As a thought arises, let it arise. Just observe it. The thoughts that arise are the result of past actions (Karmas) which result in the attachments and aversions stored on our “hard disks”. During Sadhana, these thoughts arise as the processes for cleaning our hard disk begins. Just observe a thought as it arises, do not attach your mind to it, just let it go. As you let a thought go another might come. Observe it as well, and let it go. This is just like standing on the side of a street observing the cars as they come and go. Gradually, the traffic will thin out and the moments between one thought going away and the next thought coming will begin to increase. These are the moments of calmness and bliss. When the hard disk of our attachments and aversions is cleaned through regular Sadhana, deep meditation will automatically follow and you will realize your true nature. This is essentially what Bhagwan Shri Krishna conveyed to Arjuna in the Bhagwad Geeta.
- **Question:** I am unable to sit cross-legged on the floor for Sadhana because of stiffness in my body. Is it fine for me to sit for Sadhana in a comfortable chair or sofa? Are there any limitations or issues I should be concerned about when I do so?

Answer: When one sits for Sadhana it is very important for one’s body to be able to move freely and comfortably without having ones mind worry about falling off ones seat or hitting something. For that reason it is better for Sadhaks to sit on the floor on a soft rug covered by a plain cloth, so they do not have their minds occupied by discomfort, or the fear of falling, or hitting something if physical Kriyas (movements) happen automatically. One need not sit cross-legged or in any specific way. If one is not able to sit on the floor one may sit on a sofa or chair or whatever one is comfortable sitting on. Just make sure that your movements are as unrestricted as possible and that your mind is not preoccupied worrying about falling off the chair/sofa or of you hitting something. Sit in a normal, natural and simple posture and leave it up to the Mother Energy (Prana Shakti) to do the rest.
- **Question:** Is it possible to know how much progress one has made on the path of achieving Samadhi? For example, is it possible to know which Chakra ones Kundalini has penetrated?

Answer: When we try to assess our specific spiritual progress we put ourselves in the position of a judge, for which most of us are not truly qualified. As I had mentioned in my answer to a similar question in the previous issue, a simple way to assess our progress is: if our attachments (wants and desires) and aversions have begun to reduce then we can be sure that our Sadhana is on the right track. Just look inside yourself and honestly judge if your attachments and aversions are reducing or increasing and you will know whether or not you are making progress. As one saintly lady told a Sadhak who was interested in finding out about his spiritual progress “A flower never asks others about how beautiful or fragrant it is, those who experience its beauty and fragrance know”.
- **Question:** Why are Kriyas (physical or energy/pranic movements) different for different Sadhaks when it is the same energy (Kundalini Shakti) that is awakened in all?

Answer: Although the energy that is awakened, the Kundalini Shakti, is the same in all Sadhaks, each Sadhak comes with different initial conditions. No two individuals have the same spiritual basis and Samskars (attachments, aversions and other characteristics that result from past Karma). Because of this, each individual comes with a different and unique “hard disk” and therefore the “cleanup process” required for each one of us is different. The Kriyas that arise during Sadhana are nothing more than manifestations of this “cleanup process”, therefore the Kriyas that each Sadhak experiences are unique to his/her needs. As the cleanup process continues the Kriyas experienced also change, becoming increasingly subtle as the Sadhak becomes more and more clear about his/her true nature.

P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj's visit to the Middle East

At the request of Sadhaks in the Middle East, P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj visited the countries of Kuwait and Bahrain in November 2008. It gave Sadhaks in those countries an opportunity to host P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj, to get recharged in their own practice of Maha Yoga, and to help spread the Universal Brotherhood message of Maha Yoga to their friends in the broader communities. Despite his advanced age, P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj decided to go on this visit for the good it would do to the Sadhaks and to the communities in the two countries. He was accompanied on the visit by Dr. S. S. Deshpande.

Kuwait - November 9th to 11th, 2008

After an on-time arrival in Kuwait on November 9th, 2008, P. P. Kaka Maharaj and Dr. Deshpande were given a very traditional welcome - replete with Aarti, the sound of shehnai, and flowers - at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Abhijeet Ranade.



P. P. Kaka Maharaj in Kuwait

After resting for a short while, P. P. Kaka Maharaj did not waste any time and began his effort to spread the message of Maha Yoga right away.

He gave a short discourse on Maha Yoga to those gathered at the Ranade home and led them through a short meditation. Later in the evening he gave a longer discourse in Hindi at the home of Dr. Patwari, where the audience included people from the Bengali, Punjabi and Maharashtrian communities. The audience was very much engaged in the discussion and asked several questions about Maha Yoga and seemed quite inspired by P. P. Kaka Maharaj's message.

The next day, after meeting with several Sadhaks, well-wishers and families from the community who had come to see him during the day, in the evening, P. P. Kaka Maharaj gave a discourse in English at the home of Mr. Vipat, the President of the Maharashtra Mandal in Kuwait. Mr. Abhijeet Ranade introduced him to the audience, which included people from various communities.

The audience appreciated P. P. Kaka Maharaj's discourse on Maha Yoga as was evident in the discussion that followed, but more importantly, most audience members were absorbed in the short meditation which followed the discourse. This was a clear indication that Maha Yoga is not just a theoretical exercise for discussion, but a practical method for anyone to easily achieve a meditative state.



P. P. Kaka Maharaj Poojan

Kuwait - November 9th to 11th, 2008 (continued)

On November 11th, the final day of P. P. Kaka Maharaj's Kuwait visit, Mr. and Mrs. Ranade showed him and Dr. Deshpande some of the sights around Kuwait. They visited the 120 meter tall Kuwait Tower with a revolving viewing gallery on top, saw photographs depicting some of the history of Kuwait, and saw the glimmering waters of the expanse of the Arabian Sea nearby.



P. P. Kaka Maharaj and Dr. Deshpande at the Arabian Sea



P. P. Kaka Maharaj, Dr. Deshpande and Shri Ranade with Kuwaiti schoolchildren and their teacher

There were several Kuwaiti school children in and around the tower, who were quite curious about P. P. Kaka Maharaj, so he took the opportunity to bless them and to wish them well. Later, P. P. Kaka Maharaj also went to the beach along the Arabian Sea, and through the recitation of Sanskrit shlokas (scriptural verses) gave himself a virtual bath in the sea.

Later in the day, P. P. Kaka Maharaj and Dr. Deshpande left for Bahrain. Although it was a short visit, the Sadhak community and others who attended the discourses were highly energized because of it. The community felt fortunate to have such a saintly person in their midst, who was able to communicate the message of Maha Yoga with such conviction and clarity and to remove any of the doubts many Sadhaks face with such ease and expertise. The hosts feel blessed that they were given the opportunity to be in his holy presence for the duration of the visit.

Reported by Mrs. Mrudula Ranade



P. P. Kaka Maharaj and Dr. Deshpande at the Kuwait Tower with Kuwaiti schoolchildren

Bahrain - November 11th to 18th, 2008

P. P. Kaka Maharaj and Dr. Deshpande arrived in Bahrain, from their successful visit to Kuwait, on the evening of November 11th 2008. Upon reaching the home of their host, Mr. Anil Dandge, P. P. Kaka Maharaj was greeted by Mrs. Dandge with a traditional welcome ceremony with Aarti and flowers.



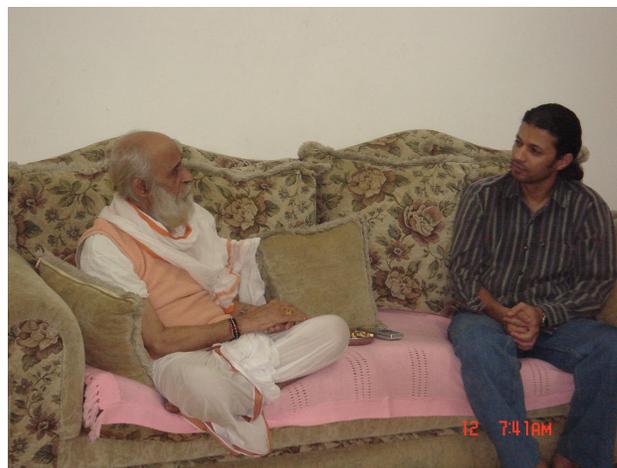
Mrs. Dandge welcomes P. P. Kaka Maharaj with Aarti



Entering the Dandge home on a path of flowers

Once again, P. P. Kaka Maharaj did not waste any time in spreading the message of Maha Yoga to those gathered to welcome him and gave a short discourse explaining the importance of our common Mother, the Mother Energy or Prana Shakti we all share. The discourse was followed by a short meditation along the lines of the introductory approach to Maha Yoga which P. P. Kaka Maharaj has recommended to non-initiates in recent years.

The next day in the afternoon several people from the community came to seek his guidance and blessings. Once again he explained to them importance of our common Mother Energy and the universal brotherhood it implies.



Discussing Maha Yoga with a Sadhak

That evening, P. P. Kaka Maharaj was invited to give a discourse at the home of Mr. Jeevan Shanware. He was introduced to those gathered by Dr. Deshpande, and after leading a 9 minute introductory meditation P. P. Kaka Maharaj gave a talk in which he addressed the simplicity of Maha Yoga. Since many of the attendees were unfamiliar with Maha Yoga but were more aware of Bhakti Yoga, the Yoga of Devotion, P. P. Kaka Maharaj explained how all Yoga approaches lead to same end-goal and how Maha Yoga encompasses them all. He told the audience that upon initiation into Maha Yoga, a Sadhak (initiate) will automatically experience and perform whatever Yoga approach is best suited for his/her spiritual progress. The Mother Energy, once activated, will automatically guide the initiate without any effort on the initiate's part.

Bahrain - November 11th to 18th, 2008 (continued)

The following day being a Thursday (Guru's Day), P. P. Kaka Maharaj was invited to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Manish Datar, where a group of devotees who meet every Thursday to perform Aarti and sing Bhajans had gathered. Mrs. Meenal Datar welcomed P. P. Kaka Maharaj at the Datar residence in the traditional way. After Aarti and Bhajans, P. P. Kaka Maharaj gave a discourse in which he explained that the practice of Maha Yoga is not limited to, or bound by, any religion. One does not have to follow the tenets of Hinduism to become a Maha Yoga initiate and that the practice of Maha Yoga is open to all. Any one seeking spiritual uplift can progress on this path, regardless of religious beliefs. The discourse was followed by a 9 minute introductory meditation and a question and answer session.



Mrs. Datar welcomes P. P. Kaka Maharaj

Every Friday, devotees of P. P. Swami Chinmayananda meet at the Chinmaya Mission at 7 in the morning to recite various Sanskrit shlokas, particularly from the Bhagwad Geeta. P. P. Kaka Maharaj was invited to such a gathering on the fourth day of his Bahrain visit to give a discourse on the oneness of Maha Yoga and teachings of Bhagwan Shri Krishna in the Bhagwad Geeta. Coincidentally, the devotees were reading the sixth chapter of the Bhagwad Geeta that day; the chapter which covers the path of meditation and is most related to the teachings of Maha Yoga. P. P. Kaka Maharaj explained the 25th shloka of the sixth chapter which best describes the meditative state and how to achieve it through the path of Maha Yoga. He also explained the true meaning of universal brotherhood and how Maha Yoga can help everyone experience it. Following the discourse P. P. Kaka Maharaj led the devotees in a 9 minute introductory meditation session.



At the Chinmaya Mission

P. P. Kaka Maharaj's visit to the Chinmaya Mission also included a talk he gave to the children's group there, in which he explained to them how to do "Self-Pooja" or the worship of the Divine Energy present in each and every one of us. He also led the children in a 5 minute introductory meditation session.



Giving a discourse at the Datar home



Teaching children how to do Self-Pooja

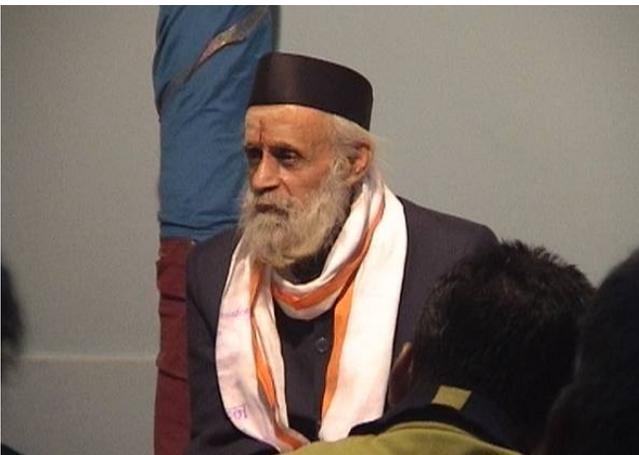
Bahrain - November 11th to 18th, 2008 (continued)



Giving a discourse to the group of devotees

On the fifth day of his Bahrain visit, P. P. Kaka Maharaj was invited to give a discourse on Maha Yoga to a group of devotees who meet every Saturday to read and discuss Hindu scriptures such as the Upanishads and recite texts such as Shri Vishnu Sahastranaam and Shri Hanuman Chaalisa. In his talk to the group, P. P. Kaka Maharaj described the simplicity of Maha Yoga and the importance of Prana Shakti - the universal Mother Energy. He explained how the Mother Energy pervades and binds all human beings regardless of traditions, religions, gender, caste, creed, etc. He also told the devotees about the Universal Brotherhood Day on February 8th, 2009, when all those interested can sit for Sadhana (meditation) between 6:11 am and 6:32 am local time and experience a taste of the meditative state Maha Yoga can bring about. Once again the discourse was followed by a 9 minute introductory meditation session.

The next day was Sankashti Chaturthee, an auspicious day when members of the Maharashtra Mandal of Bahrain get together each month to perform Aarti to Lord Ganesha. P. P. Kaka Maharaj was invited that day to give a discourse to the devotees who had gathered for the Aarti. Following an introduction by Dr. Deshpande, P. P. Kaka Maharaj gave a well-received discourse on Maha Yoga and led a 5 minute introductory meditation session. This was followed by a short question and answer session, and the event ended with the devotees performing the Aarti.



At the Maharashtra Mandal



At the Krishna Mandir

Every Monday for the past forty years, devotees have gathered at the Shri Krishna Mandir in Bahrain for Satsang (good association). The Shri Krishna Mandir invited P. P. Kaka Maharaj on the seventh day of his Bahrain visit to give a talk on MahaYoga. P. P. Kaka Maharaj and Dr. Deshpande were greeted by the temple priests once they reached Mandir. Satsang began with reciting Sanskrit shlokas and devotional songs.



Dr. Deshpande introduces P. P. Kaka Maharaj

Bahrain - November 11th to 18th, 2008 (continued)

In his discourse, P. P. Kaka Maharaj explained the simplicity of Maha Yoga and the reality of Universal Brotherhood. He also explained that the Maha Yoga path is open to all humankind and does not require Sadhaks to change their methods of devotion or religion. Sadhaks can continue to perform their traditional ways of devotion and religion because when they sit for Sadhana as Maha Yogis they are not to do anything religious or anything at all, other than surrendering themselves to the Divine Energy that resides within them. This way a Sadhak can experience the blessings of the Divine Energy without having anything to do with religion or other means of devotion. P. P. Kaka Maharaj also wished for everyone to become “Yogi” and blessed all the attendees. After the discourse, the Mandir priest urged all devotees to participate in the Universal Brotherhood Day to be held on February 8th, 2009. (See announcement in the e-newsletter)



At the Krishna Mandir

Following the successful and inspiring visit to Kuwait and Bahrain, P. P. Kaka Maharaj and Dr. Deshpande returned to Mumbai on November 18th, 2008. Heartfelt thanks for making the visit a success go to:

Shri Abhijit Ranade
Shri Sharad Kulkarni
Shri Rajesh Rao
Shri P. Kumar
Shri Jeevan Shanware
Managing Committee of Chinmaya Mission
Managing Committee of Maharashtra Culture Society
Managing Committee of Shri Krishna Mandir

Reported by Shri Anil Dandge

“Science and Spirituality” forum in Jalgaon, India

It was quite an evening at Jalgaon, a medium sized city in the Western Indian state of Maharashtra, where the audience got a chance to listen to two highly regarded persons in their own fields, world renowned scientist Dr. Vijay Bhatkar and Maha Yoga Master P. P. Shri Narayan Kaka Dhekane Maharaj.

The Jalgaon center of P. P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Mahayoga Trust had arranged an open-to-all program “Science and Spirituality” aimed at providing an all-encompassing view about both Science and Spirituality. The program took place on December 3rd, 2008, on the ground of KCE Society, a leading educational institution in Jalgaon.



Opening ceremony



P. P. Kaka Maharaj addressing the audience

After the welcome speeches and introductions, Dr. Bhatkar began by contrasting our ever-changing understanding of the nature of reality through scientific pursuit, compared with the everlasting framework that spirituality provides. As new scientific theories are developed and experiments performed, we find ourselves discarding older scientific theories and accepting newer ones which seem to describe reality better. Some of the laws of science that were accepted as true by earlier scientists, have in recent years been modified or proven to be incorrect by modern scientific findings. Humanity is still looking for the “theory of everything”, and even when it finds such a theory, it is very likely to be modified by future scientific research. On the other hand, Dr. Bhatkar explained, the knowledge that is gained through spirituality seems to be permanent. He mentioned that Saint Jnyaneshwar wrote “Jnyaneshwari” around 700 years ago, but its depiction of the nature of reality and how Sadhaks can actually experience it, continue to guide aspirants even in this day and age. Saint Tukaram wrote “Gatha” about 400 years ago and its teachings are as true today as they were when the treatise was written. Above all, the Bhagwad Geeta, which is believed to have been written thousands of years ago, and is itself the essence of the Upanishads which preceded it, continues to provide fresh guidance to seekers of reality even in today’s context.

Dr. Bhatkar also mentioned that the methodology of science, i.e. the way humans learn about the nature of reality through physical science, has its own inherent limitations. As a result, the knowledge gained through the use of physical resources alone is limited by the physical limitations of those resources. Only spirituality can provide the possibility of unlimited knowledge that goes beyond the boundaries imposed by such limitations. He asked P. P. Shri Narayan Kaka Maharaj to shed light on how one can take the path of spirituality to find the ultimate truth and the nature of reality.

P. P. Shri Narayan Kaka Maharaj told the audience that spirituality indeed is the ultimate source of knowledge, and the path of Maha Yoga is a very simple, effective and practical way to experientially understand the nature of reality. Then, instead of giving a long discourse to justify his assertion, he right away led the audience through a 9 minute practical experience of Sadhana (meditation).

“Science and Spirituality” forum in Jalgaon, India



Roll of Honor being presented to P. P. Kaka Maharaj



With Dr. Bhatkar



Partial view of the audience

He asked the audience members to sit relaxed and just observe their breathing, which is the physical manifestation of Prana or the Mother Energy present in us all. There was pin-drop silence for the whole duration of the session even though it was being conducted outdoors. Members of the audience seemed to really get into the Sadhana and begin to experience the understanding and the calmness it brings. He followed the Sadhana session by giving a short discourse on Maha Yoga, emphasizing its practical usefulness in today's context. He suggested that the more people practice Maha Yoga, greater is the chance for achieving world peace, because it enables everyone who practices it to **experientially** understand the reality of Universal Brotherhood. Sadhaks are able to experience the fact that we all have the same Prana Shakti (Universal Mother Energy) within us and thus we are children of the same Mother.

The two hour program was well received by the audience of about 3000 comprised of people of all ages, including students from the greater Jalgaon area. The event was covered by the local press and media, and ended with reporters conducting interviews with P. P. Kaka Maharaj and Dr. Bhatkar after the main program was over. This was the first such program held in the greater Jalgaon area. Its success has led the Trust and the KCE Society to agree to jointly host more such programs over the coming years.

Reported by Shri Milind Joshi

Maha Yoga Chaitanya Melawa - Mumbai

On December 25th 2008, as they have every year, with the blessings of P. P. Kaka Maharaj, Sadhaks and others interested in Maha Yoga from the Greater Mumbai area gathered together for a Chaitanya Melawa - a gathering to celebrate Chaitanya, the Universal Energy that is present in all of us. About 150 Sadhaks and over 200 members of the general public attended the Melawa which was held at the Shri Vithal Mandir Sabhagruha (meeting hall) in Ghatkopar, Mumbai. The event was made special by the on-stage presence of Shri Shreekrishna Shreepad Bhat, who is Chairman of the Maharashtra Astrologers Association, P. P. Shri Sharad Rao Joshi Maharaj from Pune, P. P. Dr. Shamsundar S. Deshpande Maharaj from Thane and Vedmurti Shri Suryakant Rakhe Maharaj.

The Melawa began with a one hour Maha Yoga meditation session for Sadhaks alone. This was a wonderful opportunity for Sadhaks to sit for Sadhana (meditation) in the presence of many Maha Yoga luminaries.

Following this, the session was thrown open to the general public. Shri Bhat gave a talk on the scientific basis for astrology, a topic of great interest to all attendees. P. P. Joshi Maharaj then explained Maha Yoga and led the attendees through a short introductory meditation session. P. P. Deshpande Maharaj brought to the audience P. P. Kaka Maharaj's message of Maha Yoga and its relevance to all of humankind. He emphasized the importance of Prana, the Mother Energy that is present in all of us, and our Universal Brotherhood. The general audience left inspired and the Sadhaks charged with a booster shot of Energy they derived from being in the presence of each other and the Maha Yoga luminaries on the stage.

Reported by Shri Hemant Pethare

Global Maha Yoga Trial - February 8th, 2009 from 6:11 am to 6:32 am local time

Shri Kaka Maharaj would like to invite everyone on this earth to participate in a Global Introductory Trial of Mahayoga Shaktipat (Siddhayoga) for the uplift of all humankind. This introductory trial will be held on February 8th, 2009, from 6:11 am to 6:32 am local time. Those interested can participate during that time at no cost from the privacy of their own homes. All are eligible to participate in this trial regardless of religion, race, sex, age, caste or creed. This world-wide trial can be considered to be a “trailer” or a precursor for the awakening of one’s Kundalini Shakti (Universal Life Energy) through Shaktipat (transfer of Energy) from a Siddha Yoga Master. It is a rare opportunity to experience first-hand such a transmission of Energy from a Siddha Guru.

Here’s how to participate:

- At the designated time (February 8th, 2009, from 6:11 am to 6:32 am local time) sit comfortably with your eyes closed in a quiet location in your home. Instantly observe a wave of energy along your spinal column.
- Relax your body completely in order to minimize the awareness of your body.
- Let your mind observe your involuntary breathing.
- Observe your experiences during the designated time interval and if you wish you may share them by e-mail with P. P. Narayan Kaka Maharaj at (mahayoga_kaka@yahoo.com).

Upcoming Events:

P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Punyatithi celebration at Rameshwaram, India - February 11th and 12th, 2009

P. P. Kaka Maharaj has invited Sadhaks to celebrate the 54th Punyatithi of P. P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj at Rameshwaram, India, where he will be leading the events on 11th and 12th February, 2009. P. P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj was the Maha Yoga Master who initiated both P. P. Gulvani Maharaj and P. P. Kaka Maharaj into Maha Yoga.

Program at Rameshwaram

10th February, 2009 - Sadhaks from all over India will arrive at Rameshwaram.

11th February, 2009 - Programs such as Sadhana Shibir (gathering), Shobha Yatra (procession), etc.

12th February, 2009 - P. P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Punyatithi celebrations

13th February, 2009 - Return journey

Programs on 12th Feb will include early morning Sadhana, Geeta reading, Tirthraj, Mahaprasad, Mantrajagar, Aarti, Palkhi (celebratory procession) and Bhajans (after 10.00 pm). P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj will address the attending Sadhaks and provide guidance on Maha Yoga.

San Francisco Bay Area, US

Introductory meditation (Purvabhyas) sessions for interested non-Sadhaks and Sadhaks are held each month in the San Francisco Bay area. Sadhaks also meet each month to conduct a Samuhik Sadhana (group meditation). For information about future such events in the Bay Area please contact Mrs. Neha Vishwarupe at (neha.vishwarupe@gmail.com).



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What's New

The Ashram website has been updated with lots of new information. Please go to:

<http://www.mahayoga.org/>

How to contribute content to the e-newsletter

The goals of our e-newsletter are:

1. Spread the word about Siddha Yoga.
2. Provide virtual Satsang to Sadhaks
3. Share relevant life experiences which might help the Sadhak community
4. Ask Kaka Maharaj for guidance on Siddha Yoga
5. Share news about Siddha Yoga events around the world

If you want to contribute content (articles, news reports, questions, life experiences) related to any of the above objectives please send it to:

Self.awakening@gmail.com

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May all desire to follow this nectarous Siddhayoga Path!